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THOUGHTS
ON
REVELATION,
DEDUCED
FROM THE TRUE NATURE
OF
EVIDENCE.

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PREFACE.

AT a time like the present, when so many daily enlist themselves under the banners of infidelity—not from a candid view of the evidence by which religion is supported, but, from the bold, though unfounded assertions, of those whom this world hath blinded; it will not, I am persuaded, be considered as an unworthy effort in that individual, who raises his feeble voice in the cause of truth, and suggests, for the consideration of others, those arguments which have operated on his own mind.

The following reflections present but a brief view of the question, although, I flatter myself, they will direct the attention of the reader to some points in

the controversy which have latterly been less insisted upon, than others of inferior magnitude.

The object of this Publication was not to exhibit that profound investigation, with all the intricate mazes, which the deep-read Theologist might require ; but, to present a few unadorned observations, on the most important of subjects, for youth, or those persons who have not opportunity or leisure, for complicated and deep researches.

To many of my young acquaintance, I have verbally given the following reasonings with some advantage ; and the hope that in this printed form, they may operate alike favourably, in a larger circle, is the only motive which could have induced me to give the subsequent reflections to the public.

I think it right to state, that I have availed myself, occasionally, of the labours of the great CUDWORTH, and the excellent MICHAELIS ; to the latter in particular, I am indebted for the critical remarks on the

Hebrew language ; for, on a subject of this nature, to him whose heart is interested, it will appear of more consequence to derive strength from others, than, from a supercilious contempt of preceding writers, to labour at exhibiting new armour, which has never been tried, and which may be found weak, although the partiality of the maker, might have deemed it impenetrable.

The principal writers on the side of infidelity, have labored to monopolize to themselves all arguments founded upon *experience* ; and the writers in favor of christianity, have too generally neglected to assert the undeniable right which their system has to the superior advantage of these arguments.

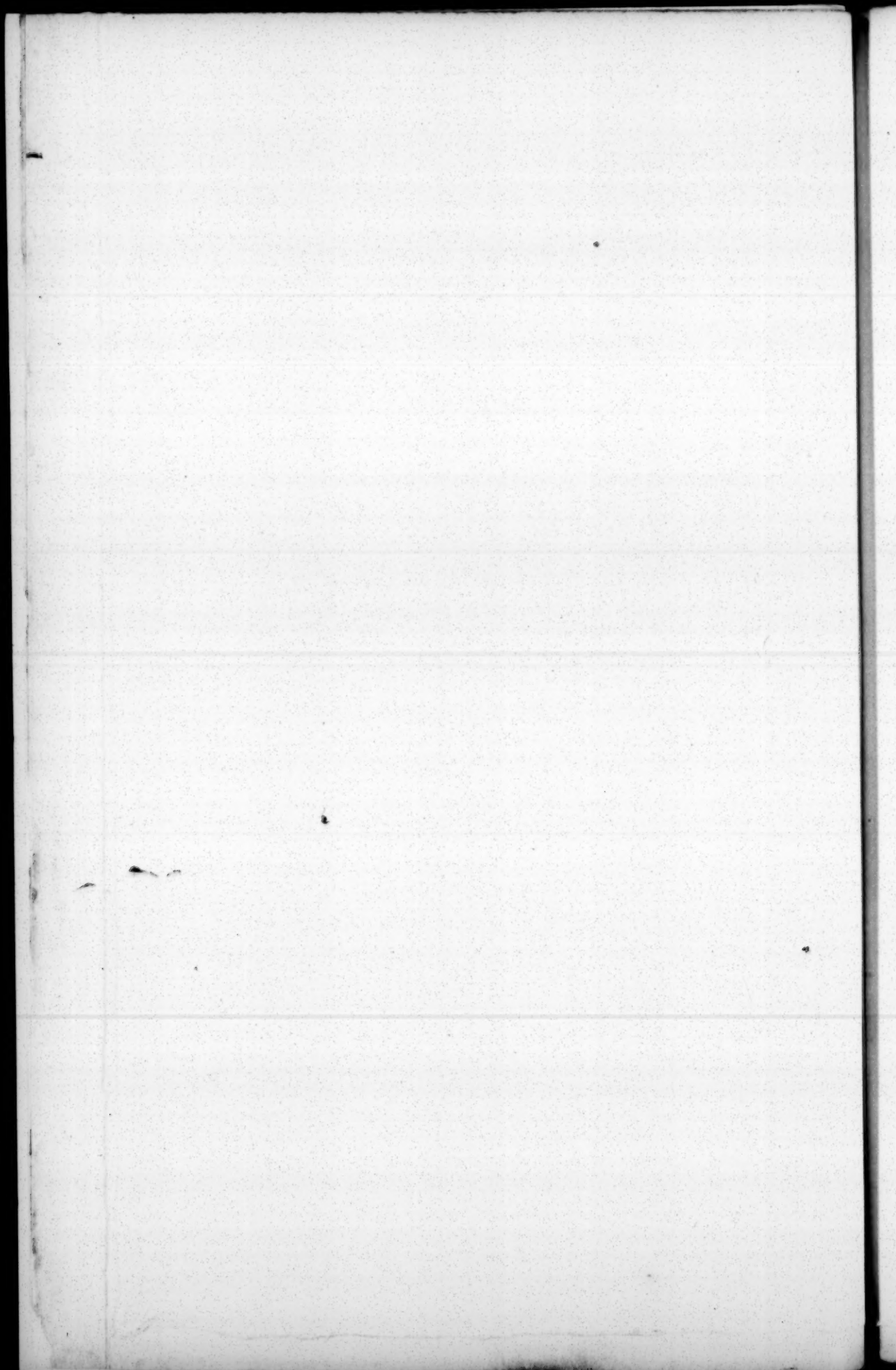
So full is my persuasion of the strength of *evidence* founded on *experience* ; and so complete my conviction of the injustice of every attempt to wrest it from the cause of christianity, that the chief object of

the following sheets, is to rescue it from the wrongs it has sustained, and claim for it the distinguished relation it bears to revelation.



ERRATA.

- Page 28 line 11—for *are* read *is*.
36 line 7—for *are* read *is*, and place a comma after *facts*,
41 line 6—from bottom—for *if* read *though*, and line four
below, for *then* read *and*.
47 line 10—for *means* read *mean*.
54 line 3 from bottom—for *but not* read *but cannot generate*,
and next line—for *divine feelings* read *cogent feelings*.
89 line 13—for *is* read *are a people*.
112 line 2 from bottom—for *prove* read *proves*.



THOUGHTS
ON
REVELATION.

THE virulence with which Revelation has been opposed, and now is assailed, in this supposed age of reason, is not upon the whole unfavorable to the establishment of its important truths; able and successful advocates have arisen, in vindication of the testimony by which it is supported.

From the days of *Celsus*, *Porphyry*, *Spinoza*, *Hume*, *Voltaire*, and his vulgar and coarse disciple *Thomas Paine*, a succession

of learned champions has entered the list in defence of the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures; and it is proved in a manner so satisfactory, that nothing but determined perverseness can doubt, that they were received by the persons to whom they were addressed, at the period in which they were written, and considered by them as the sacred deposit of truth.

It is by no means my intention on this occasion, to enter into the mighty mass of evidence, by which the learned have established the canon of scripture; suffice it to say, that we have a well attested succession of proof.

The Old Testament is supported by the history and tradition of the world, by the belief and ceremonies of the jews, and by the reference of the new to its several parts.

The New Testament compiled by the immediate disciples of our Lord, is acknowledged by a regular chain of historic evidence, by the general voice of writers in the first ages of christianity, and by the concurrent testimony of those who opposed its doctrines; all which it behoves the adversaries of revelation to set aside, before their desultory fallies of wit and ridicule, can deserve a better name than shameless indelicacy.—

Clement of Rome, Dionysius of Corinth, Hermes, Ignatius, Policarp, Papius, Ireneaus, Potbius, Justin Martyr, Tatian, Jerome, Tertullian, &c. &c. are all of them writers of the first ages, some of them were personally known to the apostles, and others to their immediate disciples; in their undoubted works, reference is made to the principal parts of the new testament; and though sta-

tioned in parts of the world widely distant, most probably unacquainted with each other, and with the languages they spake; yet the accordance of argument, and reference to facts, prove them to have derived their conviction from the same source.

Such a body of evidence as is brought forward in support of the authenticity of the bible, is not to be adduced in favor of any other writings, ancient or modern. The *Rambler* is not more fully proved to be the work of *Johnson*, than the writings attributed to *Moses*, *Isaiab*, *Daniel*, *Matthew*, *Paul*, &c. are proved to be theirs; and the apparent inconsistency of parts is clearly accounted for, and fully reconciled, by the labours of the learned.*

* Perhaps a more elaborate and judicious defence of the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures, has not issued from the pen of man, than is to be found in *Cudworth's*

A multitude of great names might be selected from the establishment, who have deserved well of mankind, for their laborious researches; we mention as productions of

intellectual System of the Universe; he there proves, that the apparent contradictions which at first view present themselves on a perusal of the bible, are, when properly understood, perfectly concordant to truth, and to each other.—He avers, that the physical errors which seem to exist in the scriptures, and form the broad foundation of the cavils of infidelity, have in reality, no existence at all.—That they arise from the very confined knowledge which we in general possess of the Hebrew language. He proves the Greek translation, commonly called the Septuagint, being made after the Babylonish captivity, when the sense of the hebrew words was in a great measure lost, is extremely imperfect. For the Greek language is destitute of words, to convey the full and proper meaning of the hebrew expression; and it is evident, that the translators accommodated their interpretation, to their own corrupt and erroneous views, both in Theology and Philosophy.—In the course of his learned enquiry, the Dr. proves the Hebrew to have been the original language, and that the Phenecian, the Chaldaic, the Syriac, the Arabic, the Greek, and the

the present age, *Kennicot*, *Paley*, and *Marshe's translation of Michaelis*; but as these may be suspected by the philosophers against whom we contend, of being swayed by interested motives, and their labours on that

Latin, were derived from it; that each root is taken from some particular beast, bird, plant, flower, or some other sensible object, and employed to represent some very obvious idea, action, or condition, raised by such sensible object, from whence it is carried farther to represent spiritual or mental things.

The pointings in the Hebrew language, he is of opinion, is of modern invention, being introduced some centuries later than the days of our Saviour.

The Dr. proceeds very elaborately to prove the divine origin of the Bible, from the position of the Sun, the rotation of the planetary orbs, and various other phenomena of nature;—he affirms, that by comparing every true observation and experiment, made by the Royal Society, by foreign societies, or by private learned individuals, he finds them perfectly concordant to the system of philosophy, revealed in the scriptures. This is certainly one of the first of human arguments in favour of their divine origin.

account stigmatized as mere professional partiality, we add to the illustrious catalogue, *Lardner, Leland, Lock, Newton, Littleton,* and *West*, whose works do their piety and their ability, the highest honor; will amply repay an attentive perusal, and are freed from the suspicion of a biased understanding.

Against the deliberate and stable conviction of men, conspicuous for their learning, and equally eminent for virtue and piety, what have the self-created philosophers of the present day to oppose? they bring forward the crude productions of untaught reason, which disdaining assistance, sets itself up as the standard of truth.—They affirm, that the scriptures assert impossibilities;—that they represent the Deity in characters, which in their view, are inconsistent and contradictory;—that the known and acknowledged

laws of nature are represented as violated, contrary to all the evidence which our own experience has taught us, and the discoveries of philosophy have demonstrated to be the regular law of nature.

They further assert, that not only the system of nature is inimical to belief in them, but that they propagate sentiments derogatory to the dignity of human nature. They represent man as rational, and to the intellectual faculty add clear and explicit displays of the essential law of his well-being; and yet declare him to be involved in all the blindness of prejudice, the mere creature of feeling, actuated by momentary impulse; regardless of the dictates of reason, a traitor to his own felicity, and the constant, daring, incorrigible rebel, against the clear, and reiterated proclamation of the principles of his real felicity.

Notwithstanding the deepened shades which are spread over this picture; tracing nature to her source, and the general history of man, we are compelled to acknowledge the correctness of the outline: among all the animal tribes, we have no instances that can equal the ferocious and sanguinary disposition of man—hunger is the usual spur to the beasts of the forest, in their predatory excursions; and when their voracious cravings are satisfied, their rapacity ceases.—But man, civilized man, polished by science, and meliorated by politeness, arms against his fellow-man, without apparent motive; a mere difference of opinion, has repeatedly deluged the earth with blood, and laid waste the fairest portion of the globe.—Therefore, however offensive to the dignity of our nature, or the persuasion so fondly adopted, of the

moral rectitude of the human mind, we beg leave still to regard the sacred scriptures, as a narration of facts, predictions of future events, and a deposit of just principles ; all uniting, to represent the actually existing state of man ; and to display the divine character, in all its beauty, and all its sublimity.

Impressed as I am with a deep sense of its importance, I sincerely lament that the argument rests not in abler hands ; yet if my endeavours shall incline a superior mind to close reflection on the subject, its fruitful resources will cast a radiance, where my clouded intellect may have created an obscurity.

To enter into so important a subject with the least shadow of probable advantage, requires a clear comprehension of the NATURE OF EVIDENCE ; allow me then to solicit attention to this essential particular, and if we

judge rightly, a full explanation here, will leave little difficulty to the reasoning we purpose to follow.

In this pursuit we expect to make it appear, that principles are the great and dignified tuition of Revelation; and actions only as they exemplify these: consequently, we infer, that things are what they are, independent of us, and our perceptions of them, and of every medium through which they are manifested; but can be known to limited beings, only in such things as fall within the limitation assigned to their being.

Truly feeble, and greatly circumscribed, is human intellect. Things, with their modifications, are all that our senses can take cognizance of; and if principles be made known to us, which are not exemplified by matter, form, or motion, or by reflection

upon the energies of our own minds, it is evident, this can be only by revelation from some superior intelligence ; and consequently, as religion is wholly conversant about a future state of existence, and those just feelings of the soul, which accord with the perfect felicity of that state ; we enquire, where are the sources in *human nature*, from whence either the knowledge or the feelings can possibly arise ?

Logicians distinguish evidence by many divisions ; analogy, testimony, demonstration, and intuition, are all of them sources of it ; and no doubt are proper grounds of credit wherein they apply : did we intend to make use of these distinctions, we should be called upon to mark their application—but apprehensive that every needless multiplication of terms has a tendency to embarrass, we shall consider

TESTIMONY AND EXPERIENCE as the general foundation of all evidence; we beg leave to urge upon the reader a full comprehension of the efficiency of it, for all the knowledge we are capable of acquiring. The solicitude expressed on this point, will not be deemed assuming, when we avow an intention of deducing from it important consequences; and such is our confidence in the stability of the sentiment, that we invite investigation, in full assurance that it will establish its truth.

To place our conviction in a clear point of view, we beg leave attentively to consider the several sources of evidence, and endeavour to demonstrate wherein they agree, in one or other of the distinctions to which we have chosen to confine ourselves.

Analogy is the lowest degree of evidence, and as must readily be perceived, is founded

in experience, for it can subserve this end no further than it accords with it ; having noticed certain effects to follow certain causes, we infer that similar causes will under parallel circumstances, produce the same effects ; but the imperfect mediums through which we receive perceptions, render us incompetent to notice every minutiae, which may attend events, and consequently this can arise no higher than presumptive evidence.

Demonstration, direct or indirect, when it attempts to establish a proposition on scientific premises, is testimony to the bulk of mankind ; and to scholars who can follow it, with a full comprehension of its terms, and feel all its different bearings, it is absolute experience ; to the mathematician, the works of *Newton* will be felt convincing, clear as the day, bottomed on the eternal foundation

of truth ; but to the rude mass of men, they can be nothing more than testimony.

Intuition, partakes more largely of the essence of experience, than either of the preceding—if indeed the term itself, be not unphilosophical, it can refer only to the clearness and precision with which things are perceived by the intellect ; that two and two are four, is called an intuitive truth, because the mind determines by immediate feeling, without the intervention of any other idea ; but that this arises from experience, cannot it is presumed, be doubted, as some acquaintance with numbers is necessary, to our comprehending the terms.

Testimony, we admit, is a source of evidence, on which we are dependant for the greater part of our information ; all historical facts, and every truth which does not origi-

nate in the direct use of our senses, or reflection upon the powers of the mind, are of this nature;—and there is a sense in which even this is referable to experience, for that which is to the recipient of information *testimony*, is to the first narrator of it *experience*.—Testimony, then, is not a distinct kind of evidence, but is that medium, by which the experience of others is rendered serviceable to us.

Paine, to apply this truth to his purpose, asserts, that admitting revelation to have been experienced by the writers of the scriptures, the christian faith is founded only in testimony, and that its whole credibility, rests upon the report of nobody knows who, &c. &c. This part of his objections to christianity, does not appear to be confuted by any of his opponents, but this is no difficulty in the way of

our theory ; we grant to him that every perception which does not arise from our senses, or from reflection upon the energies of our own minds, must be by immediate inspiration ;—this we apprehend is the doctrine of revelation, and if duly weighed, strongly attests its divine origin. But this concession does not invalidate testimony ; a system of truth is superior to a system of error in its practical tendency, when the habits are formed upon it, though the principle on which the system is founded be not experienced by us ; assent to evidence is one thing, but the feeling of the thing itself is another ; the first is due to evidence accredited by the experience of others, and the second is our own personal experience.

By faith in testimony we apply the experience of others to our advantage ; but in order

to our being benefited we should be correctly informed, and our minds impressed with feelings correspondent with those on the mind of the attester. Yet in suggesting a cautious use of testimony, we by no means concede to the insinuations of a celebrated sceptical writer, who attempts to persuade us that no testimony is sufficient to establish the truth of circumstances which supersede physical laws, or that represents events taking place out of the order which our experience may have been conversant with—"when a
 "fact attested (he observes) is such as has
 "not fallen under our notice, here is a con-
 "test of two opposite experiences, of which
 "the one destroys the other as far as it goes,
 "and the superior can act upon the mind
 "only by the force which remains; this
 "principle of experience, which gives affu-

" rance in the testimony of witness, gives us
 " also in this case an assurance against the
 " fact endeavoured to be established"—and
 he supposes this counterpoise destroys belief.
 This conclusion we apprehend arises from a
 too partial regard to the rectitude and dignity
 of the human mind, and an inattention to
 our general experience; scepticism naturally
 inclines to the flattering but fallacious per-
 suasion, that our reason is the exact standard
 of truth, and that whatever is not within
 our comprehension cannot be real. To that
 which had beginning there must necessarily
 be limitation; and so narrowly bounded is
 human intellect, that it is incapable of ad-
 mitting more than one perception at the same
 instant, the quickest comprehension consisting
 only of a rapid succession of ideas; and
 though the transitions which take place are

inconceivably swift and imperceptible, yet the succession is real,* and places in full force the folly of supposing that creatures of a day should grasp at infinity, or comprehend that boundless scope of intelligence with whom there is no succession, and to whose omniscience every thought of created intelligence, and every disposition of things, are for ever present.

* We are aware that this sentiment has its opponents, yet experience so fully substantiates the fact, that we are not capable of feeling the force of the arguments by which it is opposed; and we conceive it to be so prominent a feature of the human mind, that the slightest attention will render it obvious.—That the memory may recal former perceptions in connection with present feelings we admit; but as the mind is indivisible, we are persuaded that a consciousness of present impressions precedes the recollection of the past—for while the idea of London is upon the mind, neither that of Paris or Madrid can have any place.

Daily experience evinces to us the contracted sphere of our being ; our best knowledge is comparative ignorance, we are strangers to ourselves ; the union of matter and mind, the reciprocal action upon each other, and the sources of their energies, must ever repose in the deepest obscurity.

In the animal machine, where so much is obvious to sense, how little is decidedly ascertained ! the heart beats, the lungs play, and digestion proceeds in the stomach, but neither mechanism nor chemistry will satisfactorily account for the mode by which these operations are performed : the power is efficient, but is not under the controul of our wills, and therefore cannot be ours.

The system of the universe is established on the principles of constant motion ; gravitation, attraction, repulsion, are terms in common

use, but if they imply any thing, it is only the mode of operation, for the power which is efficient is neither one nor the other ; in fact, motion without a mover is unintelligible ; matter is inert, motion must therefore be an effect of mind ; and without reference to a principle of intelligence, either mediately or immediately, operating upon every particle of organized matter, and arranging the circumstances which inspire the feelings of mind, every thing is unintelligible.

That power which is the first cause of all energy can have no limitation, but that which arises from the perfection of its nature ; that which gives existence can modify it at will, and consequently nothing is impossible, which does not imply a contradiction.

Hobbes, to ridicule the notion of Almighty power, impiously asserts, that if it had pleased

God, he could have ordained that a tree should have been a syllogism ; the absurdity is too striking to need refutation : that words are arbitrary signs is certain, and if a language were formed in which the import of the characters should be changed, what is understood by the one might describe the other, and his contempt is impotent.

But things are what they are, independent of us and our perceptions, or modes of description ; in truth and reality they are only what they are in the all-comprehending knowledge of the Deity ; and in fact it would not be difficult to prove, that eternal necessary truths are of the essence of the Deity himself ; they existed from eternity, and will never cease to be ; their immovable relations were not created, but existed eternally. In supposing them created, we are guilty of the grossest

atheism, for if truth be produced, antecedent to such production it could not exist; consequently infinite perfection could not be ascribed to God. Truth must be the creator himself, for a contrary hypothesis supposes that something was made which the framer cannot dissolve, which destroys the omnipotence of the Deity.

But we know that necessary eternal truth cannot but be, nor can any power possibly alter its properties. Now there is nothing created but can be annihilated, therefore Truth is clearly God himself.—Those truths commonly called contingent, arising from the transactions of this perishable globe, must be fragile as their source; being the offspring of this mundane system, they necessarily perish with their parent.

Perfect intelligence, united with infinite

power, cannot produce inconsistency or absurdity ; but it is from our disjoining the essential union of the Divine Perfections, that contradictions and folly arise so thick around our theories; and while our minds are warped by prejudice, impelled by passion, and enveloped in ignorance, we confess ourselves incompetent to discover truth in its great scale of operation, and receive with gratitude the fragments which are scattered around us.

The miracles then which are daily working in our own persons, and effected in the world around us, teach us by experience that there are powers above our comprehension. That they should at any period have operated in a way not obvious to our conception, is a supposition so far from destroying the credibility of testimony, that on the contrary, by entering so fully into our standing

experience, we think it gives to it the firmest stability.

While words are descriptive of ideas, and convey to us the impression made upon the mind of the reporter, the testimony of competent witnesses may confidently be resorted to, as a just ground of credit to all possible facts which are attributed to an adequate cause, although contrary to our individual experience: on this principle we are constantly acting in the common affairs of life, and why should we reject it in matters of Revelation? If a person suffering under a fit of the gout or stone, &c. should be insulted by a denial of the reality of his pain, and an attempt were made to persuade him that he must be strangely under the delusion of imagination, to apprehend himself possessed of feelings, which were not the common ex-

perience of men, and were wholly unknown to the objector ; such a mode of reasoning would be condemned by the general consent of all mankind.

The affections and passions of the soul form the common experience of man : that they should be exercised upon the hope of a future state of blessedness, is not so incredible that we should reject all testimony in support of the fact. Now in all periods of time there have been multitudes of the human race who have professed to feel a supreme regard to the deity ; they acknowledge this feeling is not the result of tracing effect to cause, but that a consciousness of the divine omnipresence, a strong sense of obligation, and an holy fear of violating the requirements of benevolence so impressive—all influence their minds, to regard his approbation as the only pleasurable

pursuit, and the apprehension of offending him as the most afflictive state of suffering. That this affection possesses so commanding an influence as to suffer no other perception to bear it down ; all former habits and sensible things act with diminished force, and so effectually does it realize the presence and perfections of the deity, that the soul can be solaced only as it experiences assimilation to his will.

The cause of our original feelings are buried in the deepest obscurity, and the utmost precision of the strictest philosophy by no means warrants the rejection of facts and principles, which are supported by such unquestionable weight of testimony ; and when we consider the number and character of those who compose it, surely the voice of

unprejudiced reason will immediately pronounce that the cavils of infidelity, on this ground, ought to sleep for ever.

We have attempted to demonstrate that Testimony is a proper foundation for our assent to matters of fact ; in so doing, we have in some degree trenched on the nature of evidence by Experience ; yet there is still ample scope for inquiry : but as our theory gives so commanding a station to *experience*, it is incumbent on us to ascertain precisely what constitutes the thing itself.—That it cannot be the number or the frequency of impressions upon the organs of sense alone, will appear by a recollection that on many occasions we may have experienced our minds so closely engaged, as to have no distinct perception of sounds, though the vibration has been given to the air and received by the

ear ; and objects in great variety, have passed before our eyes in effect unseen, when the intellect has been pre-occupied by other perceptions. In the past moment my attention has been so engaged with this subject, that the pen in my fingers, and the pressure of my arm upon the table, were not perceived ; though now the mind is directed to them, they convey distinct notices.

That the frequency of impressions does not enter into the essence of experience, is equally clear. We may be so habituated to them as to act under them mechanically : an instance occurs to my recollection of a lawyer, who copied deeds in this way ; long habituated to the characters, he proceeded correctly, without having any idea of the subjects which they contained : precisely in the same situation is the printer, who through life is occu-

pied in the arrangement of letters, without becoming learned ; such also is the mere scholar, who has stored his memory with various characters and their combinations, but is not intelligent.

We need not multiply examples, as the most confined observation will furnish an ample store ; evincing, that neither the number nor the repetition of impressions upon the organs, but *the force with which they are felt*, constitute *real experience*. We proceed to an analysis of perception, to establish this conclusion.

Man, placed in a material world, and subject to moral government, is necessarily composed of matter and mind ; the one as connecting him with the things which surround him, and the other referring him to their principle ; but such is the distance between

mechanism and intellect, that no immediate communication can take place : the objects which surround us we perceive not immediately, but the proper organs being placed in contact with material things, (or, as in sound and sight, by the medium of air and light) a change takes place in the organ, which produces a sensation ; and this sensation is the notice to the intellect to employ its energies ; yet this sensation is neither the organ, nor the intellect, but an agent which acts between them.

We here recognize three distinct principles, which, united in their operation, constitute the whole man ; and we have now to trace their connection in furnishing ideas, and exercising volitions upon them. The body can be regarded as a system of mechanism only ; the vital principle supplies sensations, and the energetic perceives the sensa-

tions, reasons and exercises volitions upon them.*

* Ancient philosophy conceived a principle which it supposed the Soul of the World, and assigned to it some low degree of intelligence. The philosophic fathers of the church and probably St. Paul also, considered some lucid vehicle necessary to the mind in a future state of existence, and assigned to it the properties which we understand by the soul, but the thing admitted, the name is unimportant, and the reader may choose his own term. The Hutchinsonian school attributes to fire and light the same properties which are given to this lucid vehicle, and by the power of exciting the electric spark in all living animals they argue the opinion.

The philosophers of the present day, have as they conceive, more decidedly identified the electric fluid—and some have as we think, absurdly given to it the power of reflection and volition.—We grant the incomprehensibility of the electric fluid, and the difficulty of pronouncing what may be the modifications in the hands of the Almighty Architect of which it is capable—we feel no difficulty in giving to it all the properties we assign to the term Soul, but to the energies of intellect it is impossible for us to conceive it equal.—It may be the medium by which the great framer of all things

To the different organs are appropriated distinct sets of notices, and when an impression is made upon them, they each carry their own proper feeling to the mind, the perception of this sensation produces a superior feeling in the mind itself, which is consciousness, and without this inward feeling we can have no perception ; and by it is witnessed not only the perception of impressions from without, but also the energies of the

communicates the principle of life—it may excite respiration, and be that vital energy which circulates the blood, and by the agency of the nerves as conductors, or by a medium still more direct, communicate sensations to the mind.—On this last supposition, the nerves will only have the power of commanding the muscles, and executing the volitions of the intellect, but probably they serve the double purpose of sensation and muscular motion—and here we stop, and deny to it the powers of perception, reflection or volition.

mind ; and when these energies are felt in force, slight notices from the organs are obstructed, and pass off without producing the attestation of this necessary accompaniment of all that passes in the mind.—Yet so necessary is this concurrent feeling, that nothing can be received by the mind that is not witnessed by it, and that which consciousness attests cannot be discredited, for if disbelieved by all the world, its force is not diminished in that mind by which it is experienced : so substantial is this evidence, that we can make no higher appeal ; the man who rejects his own feelings denies first principles, and must be left to himself, as one who has lost all claim to reason, and is petrified to insensibility.

From this view of the office of consciousness, we conclude it is the essence of expe-

rience, and though the memory may treasure up her materials from things frivolous as well as from those which are important, yet in practical effect, those will be the most powerful which are felt in greatest force.

Let it be here noticed, that to evidence, facts are the only office of consciousness, the fitness of things is derived from a higher source, it bears testimony to the evil and to the good, and when it feels powerfully holy affections in the soul toward the Deity, it must necessarily be our accuser if seductions from without, or feelings within, violate these immediate communications of the mind with pure principles.

The principle of consciousness is not percipient, we have said that it witnesses to present feelings only; discrimination is the sole province of intellect, and when two opposing

feelings present themselves in rapid succession, reason, pure and comprehensive, must choose the good ; yet the matter of fact is clear, that which presents most powerfully, although in the view of our deliberate judgment, weak, yet in effectual operation it will be the strongest, and consequently impel our volitions.

All our original passions respect the good of the individual, or our kind, and being the product of supreme wisdom, must be appropriate to their design, but such is the limitation of our faculties, that we must necessarily realize all our feelings in succession ; we cannot take in at one perception the complex sum of sensations from without, the feelings of the soul, and the energies of the intellect ; this would approach to perfection, and by enabling us to direct to the

aggregate good, wherein alone true felicity can consist, we should be raised above the contracted enjoyment of partial gratification, and realize the sublime pleasures of our permanent existence.

But such are the anomalies and deteriorations of human nature, that we constantly seek our gratifications in present pleasurable feelings, and so powerful is the controul of sensible things, that we regard the animal and forget the man.

With feelings so bounded, the motives must be low, actions and not their rational ends will be our pursuit, contrary to the persuasions of true wisdom, which in accordance with the divine perfection, derives all its satisfaction from the harmony of practice with principle.

From this incapacity of our faculties to

experience various feelings, and exercise the intellect upon them at the same instant of time, may be deduced the high advantage of moral habits and virtuous incitements; this pursuit would be too flagrant a digression from the conclusions we wish to derive from the reasoning urged; and we shall only observe, that the organs faithfully notice to the intellect the impressions which are received by them, and when these impressions are strong, they rouse the mind to a consciousness of the feeling they produce; and if they frequently present, such is the connection of body and mind, that they assimilate to the feelings which are most familiar to the perception, and should the fascinating scenes of sensuality pressingly invite our complacency, the barriers of moral virtue will prove too feeble for resistance: and strengthened by

inveterate habit, it becomes the only pleasurable feeling, and the sweeping torrent of irresistible voluptuousness, deluges the soul.

We have attempted to trace the nature of evidence, (shall we assume too much if we add) and have shewn that experience is the foundation of all effective knowledge,* and

* Notwithstanding the learning and great ability of Dr. Campbel, displayed in his refutation of the arguments of Mr. Hume, we cannot allow that testimony has an original and instinctive influence on belief antecedent to experience, nor can we think him happy in the illustration he has chosen; that children become diffident from experience, is no proof that their credulity arises from a different source; on the contrary, we are persuaded that ideas are ever conformable to their archetypes, and children having originally no motives for representing things otherwise than as they are, it is perfectly consonant with their experience so to represent them; and when enlarged experience has convinced them that motives may arise to create disguise and misrepresentation, caution will be generated: but this we conceive is only a further advance of the same principle and each resolves itself into experience.

that consciousness constitutes the essence of experience, if not, we are authorized to infer, that all evidence by our senses, is less powerful and more indirect than that of which we feel immediately conscious, consequently we conclude that the religion of inspiration gives to its subject the highest and fullest degree of evidence our limited being can admit.

That nothing can act but where it is, is a first principle of philosophy ; to our intellect nothing can be present but its own feelings, these feelings can arise only from connexion with matter or the energies of mind, and to us it appears, that if under the pressure of those imperfections we experience, religion be a solace, then we have importunate solicitation within ourselves to resort to such an asylum ; yet if the principle had not been revealed, it is undeniable that the defective

state of man and his own inefficiency towards the securing his felicity would not have generated the holy feelings of religion. Could great names strengthen matter of fact, Aristotle has shewn that man is an imitative animal only, and that pure invention is to him impossible : from the necessity of experiencing feelings in order to our perceptions, his judgment is established, for though we admit that new arrangements may be formed, and enlarged and multiplied uses made of the ideas we possess, yet we must possess the feelings from whence they arise, before their arrangement is possible.

Nothing within ourselves nor any thing around us, has a capability of producing the sublime sentiment of religion, and as principles must exist before they can act, the mind of man cannot be religiously disposed,

till the inspiration of the Almighty teach him this wisdom.—Just perceptions of the Deity, and our relative situation unto him, constitute the essence of religion ; and these can only arise from divine communication : to all natural subjects, natural powers may apply, but to supernatural feelings a higher agency is necessary. To feel justly we must be influenced by perfect intelligence, for that only which is perfect can know perfection or reveal it to man.

Perception by feeling, being evidently the necessary law of our being, it follows that nothing but a right disposition of our feelings can be religion.—The Deity being the sum of all perfection, can alone be entitled to supreme regard ; and when the holy feeling of divine love is thus in unison with the volitions of right reason, we shall have “ the

fear of God before our eyes ;” this by realizing our weakness will lead to dependence, and the experience of benefits will exalt our affections.

The only possible assurance we can have of the principle must arise from consciousness of experiencing its influence, forcibly impressing the mind with right feelings toward our Creator, with universal charity toward our fellow-creatures, with proper ideas of ourselves, and the things which surround us, both animate and inanimate.

This benevolence of feeling, though known to us by consciousness, can be evinced to others only by the actions which it produces ; but actions strictly considered being no more than mechanical movements, are themselves neither virtues nor vices ; the sentiments from whence they arise, and the end to

which they direct, must describe their true character.

By experience we learn that certain feelings of the mind produce certain correspondent actions, and where the latter are uniform and regular, we infer the rectitude of the former—but this although the only rule by which we can judge of motive, is not sufficient to characterize the benignant feeling of religion ; so far the votaries of the most absurd superstitions may reach, but they neither recognize the fitness of the action to the end, or the feeling from whence alone it can legitimately arise.

We have heard it observed, that all religion is alike true, (or perhaps rather alike false) that nothing can be bad that teaches a man to be good, and that being a mere matter of opinion, or a chain of observances,

the system we may adopt is casual, being the result of early association and persevering habits.—If our theory be established, this objection can have no place ; yet as it professes to proceed on those just principles of experience which we have attempted to urge, we are bound in the justification of our theory to attempt the demonstration of its fallacy.—That we are the creatures of habit ; that association influences our opinions, and that experience is the only source of real knowledge, we most readily grant—but we also affirm, that the opinions we adopt, and the habits we form, do not constitute the whole of our experience, there are powers and feelings of the intellect itself, and these are what they are, independant of association and habit, and though capable of being obscured, confounded and misled, yet neither their

nature nor their office are changed.—The mind of an infidel will modify itself in the same way, and experience the same natural energies as that of the firmest believer in revelation, but it must be acknowledged under very different feelings, and to different ends, yet where strength of intellect is possessed, with a disposition to candid investigation, the experience it affords is sufficient to shew the aptitude of the means and the fitness of the end, thus detecting the errors of habit and association.—And this is all it can effect, it manifests the absurdity and inconsistency of error, and discovers so much of truth as our natural faculties can take cognizance of, but this extends only to our imbecility and wants, leaving the remedy for them totally unprovided.

By divine teaching alone this can be known;

our natural faculties have here no materials to work upon, we experience not the feeling till it be communicated from above, and consequently can have no perception ; all that is to come is veiled in the obscurity of impenetrable darkness, the immortality of the soul, the nature of a future state of existence, whether our conduct be amenable to the Supreme Judge, whether he will pardon or punish, or by what rule award the judgment, are alike, without revelation, enveloped with the mists of uncertainty.

This leads us now to consider the bible as exemplifying the operation of this necessary revelation ; man being incapable of discerning the feelings of other men, only as they are expressed in a manner obvious to his senses, or discover the application of his own to the will of the Deity, in any other way

than as manifested by mediums which appropriate to the limitation of his faculties, the examples of other men actuated by similar passions and exposed to similar circumstances, are most apposite to the case.

God, in addition to the personal experience of great characters, which were held forth as ensamples to support traditionary evidence, has announced the perfection of his nature in the moral law, and by the ceremonial, impressed the senses with the feeling proper to our relative situation as apostates from the principles of our well-being; and the scripture report instructs by precept and example, manifesting the operation and influence of just feelings in resisting the force of seductive impressions, and restraining vicious propensities. These examples, on many occasions, leave us to lament the frail-

ties of our common nature ; prone to neglect the experience past, and ready to obey the impulse of the moment : and sometimes they exhibit distinguished instances of the sublime influence of inspiration upon the human mind, carrying it from the allurements of sense, and by a hope full of immortality, inspiring a feeling of the future ; thus opposing feeling to feeling, until the triumph of faith be complete.

The pride of man does not easily stoop to the acknowledgment of his dependance upon circumstances ; he would persuade himself that his volitions are absolutely and immediately under the control of his understanding ; but it is presumed, we have evinced that the understanding can act only on the feelings present ; and if circumstances be so disposed that ceaseless solicitation to voluptuous gra-

tifications are pressing upon him, the known and acknowledged state of the human mind will compel us to affirm, that the sentiment and conduct will conform to the impression. Such is the power of association, that no undue feeling of the heart can frequently impel our volitions, without seducing the understanding, and perverting its energies to vindicate or excuse our excesses; nor is there any cupidity of conduct, or perversion of mind, but the magic power of self-love will represent to the votary of voluptuousness and the slave of malignant passions, as amiable accomplishments, the prudential requirements of station, or at the utmost, as trifling deviations from the decorums of life.

The reasoning we have pursued, will no doubt, be opposed by the philosophers against whose conclusions our argument protests; we

shall be accused of reducing reason to an insufferable state of degradation, and possibly of weakening the force of morality, by disputing the influence of rational motives on our volitions—on the first charge, we are disposed to silence ; but on the second, we demand what is the matter of fact ?

If the intellect be the source of our feelings, in proportion to its capacity will be the rectitude of our volitions—and should we suppose a being with powers extended far beyond the limits of human intellect, to such an one we must necessarily look for more perfect energies, but is this the fact ?

Waving the consideration of existences which we believe on testimony only, and cannot be demonstrated by reason, what is the case with which our positive experience is conversant ? Are men of the first genius,

and most enlarged powers, uniformly the practisers of virtue, and patterns of piety ?*

We lament, but at the same time must confess, that the history of man and our own observation, have but too commonly witnessed the union of great talents with greater vices—and we are led to conclude, that in

* If this sentiment of our reason as the source of our energies be carried to its principle, those who are consistent with it will become sceptics in religion, and licentious in politics—the offices of the former will be supplied by the schoolmaster or the philosopher, teaching right rules, and the administration of justice and all military establishments, will be superseded by the accomplishments of the dancing-master, instructing in the decorum of behaviour.—This conclusion is not mere assumption, Europe furnishes example of its solidity, and so decided is our opinion of the fallacy of the principle, that we conceive if left to itself, it would speedily produce such disorder, as would convince of its inefficacy, and demonstrate how feeble are the dictates of reason opposed to passion.

experience, reason does not dictate our feelings, but the feeling presents as a necessary foundation for perception ; and therefore, that which presents in greatest force must ever command our energies ; consequently, our conclusion again returns, that in order to a right understanding we must be possessed of just feelings.

Although such be our conclusion, we are far from esteeming lightly the office of reason.—It can judge of the feeling present, it can recollect the feeling past, and from this experience, can look forward to feelings future—it may direct the proprieties of decency, the sense of honor, the urbanities of politeness, or any of the social qualities which soften and embellish life ; but not those divine feelings arising from the sacred source of divine love.—It may be the re-

firainer of vice and the incitement to virtue ;
 for truth, though only known as a system, is
 not less consistent with itself than when ex-
 perience, and in its nature has the aptitude
 of yielding just motives, but when our feel-
 ings are not in accordance, they offer not to
 us, being deficient in that energy which
 realizes by a consciousness of personal in-
 terest.—It may declare the matter of fact,
 and support it by evidence which we may
 feel convincing ; yet we presume, a differ-
 ence is clear between our experiencing the
 force of reasons which establish the truth of a
 system ; and our feeling all the influence of
 the truth which the system unfolds, harmo-
 nizing our affections with the principle.—
 Truth is not a system, but that which all
 systems profess to elucidate, the essential per-
 fection of Deity.

That the distinction we have made between a system acknowledged on the strength of evidence by which it is supported, and truth, of which we are immediately conscious, is founded in nature, and obvious to experience, must be allowed by all who admit our definition of testimony and experience.—And the conclusion will necessarily arise, that the great peculiar truths of revelation, a state of immortality, the restoration of the vital principle with all the powers and properties essential to consciousness, a course of retribution for the criminal, a medium of mercy to the contrite, and a state of ineffable bliss for such who through divine communications are rendered pure in heart; can in no way become a principle of action to man but by a medium connecting with his experience, and this can be no other than feelings upon the mind; by these, distant things are

brought nigh, and the future rendered impressive as the present.

We now attempt to shew the truth of the scripture narrative, as an exhibition of the principle we have been tracing.—The writers to whose works reference has been made, enter so much beyond our ability into this part of the subject, that our remarks will consequently, be few.—Passing over much important matter, we first notice, the standing miracle of the Jews, being preserved a distinct people, and their prejudice and attachment to the Mosaic institutions continued for so many ages, which argues strongly for the authenticity of the writings of Moses; and, duly weighed, is in itself convincing. For should we suppose them a forgery of Samuel, or any succeeding priest or prophet, we have difficulties to encounter

which must overwhelm us in absurdities of that massive and mighty pressure, that even the pillars of priest-craft would fail to support.

If we suppose them creatures of invention, a period must be admitted when they first appeared, but in all the writings of Moses, the constant reference to circumstances with which the subjects revealed were miraculously attended, precludes this supposition ; and the frequent appeals made to the eye and ear witness of the facts, if no such events had taken place, were such an instance of shameless effrontery that no man could have the audacious madness to hazard.

The deliverance of the Jews from Egypt, their passage through the Red Sea, their perigrination of forty years in Arabia Deserta, with the supernatural circumstances attending, constitute the great theme which employed

the pen of Moses. The people to whom his writings are addressed, and whose attention he calls to the evidence to be deduced from them, were his constant companions, yet frequently so much his enemies, that any circumstance misrepresented, would have been gladly embraced, to resist the claims of a divine mission, which he founded upon them. Nor is it possible for us to doubt, unless the mind of man was then modified upon entire new principles, that they were, at the time, convincing; notwithstanding the repeated lapses of the people into infidelity.

But the human mind has at all periods been the same, and its energies have been excited in the same mode. The Hebrew infidel was an exact counterpart of the modern one: they supposed that direct means were more appropriate to the end, than the

circuitous mode adopted ; and these presume to cavil at the history, because they suppose the power of Deity could have produced the same effects with less interference.

But let the theory of experience we have urged, be carried to the full extent of the principle, and the multiplicity of wonders will appear to be necessary links in the chain of cause and effect. If it were of importance that the character of JEHOVAH should be manifested, and his power over all matter and all mind be asserted, then were the means most apposite to impress the feeling upon the nations, that would produce this conviction.

These miracles were wrought on the borders of the most powerful, populous and learned nation which then existed ; but while ancient Egypt is thus justly characterized, it is a notorious fact that it was at the same time

the most abjectly superstitious. And the infidels of this day may compare with the portrait, and hide themselves from the common shame of our degraded nature.

If the plagues of Egypt had not been known to Israel, if the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, had not attended them ; if the sea had not divided and returned upon the enemy ; if manna had not been daily rained from heaven ; if the waters had not issued from the rock ; if the earthquake and the plague had not destroyed the people ; and if the solemnity represented as accompanying the promulgation of the law from Sinai had not been a faithful narration of facts, then was Moses so far from meriting the high encomiums of Voltaire, or the attachment of the Jews, that he must be classed with the basest, weakest, and most

frantic impostors, that have ever disgraced humanity. To the faith that can believe this, no difficulty can present, to it every thing is possible.

On the chronology of the bible, much has been written. M. Baily, late mayor of Paris, has exerted himself laudably on this point ; and so nearly reconciled it with the Chinese, Hindoo, Persian, Chaldean, and Egyptian, as to leave a difference of only about fifty years in the age of the world—but the matter of fact happily, does not rest on this foundation. The speculations of philosophy or the rule of computing time, or even time itself, are as the small dust of the balance when weighed against the importance of principles the effect of which we are conscious.

Having hinted the credibility of Moses as an evidence, the account of the creation we

receive, as just and genuine, according more fully with things as they are than any scheme invented, and however made known to him, whether derived from tradition or the product of immediate inspiration, it is so natural and so harmonious with the acknowledged system of nature, of the powers and passions of men, and with the perfections of Deity, as bears within itself the strongest evidence of truth.*

* It is not necessary to recapitulate the arguments which authenticate the Mosaic narrative, but as a specimen, we will take the first objection which occurs to exercise the ingenuity of the opposers of revelation—"God said let there be light, and there was light," at a succeeding period it is said, "God created two great lights, the one to rule the day and the other the night." The objection here made is, that darkness must have necessarily covered the universe before the sun was created, and consequently, the account cannot be correct.

We answer, that by a common figure of speech, the

The admission of moral evil into our world, is detailed in the seduction of our first parents, and notwithstanding the ridicule it has sustained, is perfectly rational ; and such is the experience we have of human nature, that it would induce us to believe it must have so happened.—The structure of all languages is figurative. This observation peculiarly applies to the oriental tongues, it is not therefore the figures under which ideas are conveyed, but the fact itself, which merits philosophic enquiry.

effect is put for the cause ; and unequivocal experiments have shown that light is an universal fluid pervading all matter, that electricity, magnetism, attraction, and repulsion, are modifications thereof, and that being ignited by the rays of the sun, it illuminates the universe, and under its various modifications is the medium which governs all physical operations.

However difficult of solution may be the question of the admission of moral evil, in the works of an infinitely wise, good, and perfect Being, yet admit a seducer of superior intelligence, and allow to man free agency, and we think it may be demonstrated that his seduction must necessarily follow.

The scripture account presents us with a view of the office of passion and intellect, the one to excite action, and the other to regard its end ; and any action in which the end is lost in the means, and passion obscures and seduces intellect, furnishes us with the plain account of the fact, divested of all figure—as free agents can act only from feeling the power of incitements ; the seducer philosophized justly, and directed to passion, impressing the agreeable so strongly on the sense,

as to captivate the mind—the fruit, it is said, “ was *fair to the eye*, and to be desired.”

When we are told that Adam, an imperfect man, propagated a succession of imperfect men, we feel no surprize ; the effect cannot be above its cause. Strong impressions of sense having seduced the intellect, must act against its enfeebled struggles with imperious sway ; and it may be inferred, that energies controlled by sense, will yield a product correspondent to their origin. The desire having been excited in any case, will by a repetition of the inciting cause, give to the mind a tendency to modify that way, and by the necessary laws of association, so connect the desirable with the pleasurable, as to imply their constant conjunction.

From this event to the deluge, we have such an history of human nature, and of its

passions and propensities exulting over our fallen reason, as we know from experience must have taken place, released from the restraints of religion : as traditional evidence would weaken, through our imperfection, the further it was removed from its source, and as example could be merely local, we do not feel astonished that when the principle of religion did not operate, men should become brutal, and exhibit the melancholy picture so forcibly represented, “ the thoughts of the heart evil, only evil, and that continually.”

Tradition has recorded that a deluge has taken place ; this tradition may be clearly traced in those countries where the sacred truths of revelation have not extended : natural philosophy clearly, and in the most decided mode, confirms the truth of this tradition, by the marine substances, particularly

shells, and the bones of animals, which are found in a petrified state, in regions the most remote from the sea ; and not unfrequently, at the top of the highest mountains. Any one acquainted with the history of fossil nature must be convinced at first view, that a deluge did take place, exactly in the mode described in the bible ; “ the foundation of the great deep broken up :” for we view shells of various sorts broken into parts, and dispersed over a solid stratum of stone ; which effect could not have been produced, unless the whole surface of the earth, with its several productions, animate and inanimate, had been entirely covered with water, and totally dissolved into a general pulp or colluvies.

While this awful scene was deeply impressed upon the mind, and its marks every where pressing upon the senses ; it would

naturally be a restraint upon the conduct of man, and proclaim to him his dependance upon his God—but as these visible mementos would be gradually losing their force, a family, and through it a nation, was selected, and placed in the centre of population, of arts, of commerce, and of science, as monitors of the world, and in whose favor constant miracles were wrought, impressively proclaiming, that verily there is a God, who ruleth over the universe.

The mosaïc history is a grand display of the power, wisdom, goodness, and tender mercy of the Deity, and an odious, though faithful portrait, of the sensuality, perverseness, and rebellion, of man : the continuation of the Jewish history exhibits the same facts, with evident and repeated manifestations of divine justice, and with vivid interferences of

prompt and efficacious mercy, which were proclaimed, enforced, and reasoned upon by the prophets; but we mourn to confess, that this justice, and this mercy, were exerted with little effect, and proves the feeble influence of reason, when opposed to passion.

The infidel jester has frequently felt the swell of exultation animate his bosom, at the idea that he might provoke a sneer of contempt on the thoughtless countenance of ignorance, when contrasting the conduct which resulted from the artless simplicity of the age, and from local customs, with that which necessarily springs from the modern artificiality of fastidious refinement: "evil be to him who evil thinks," is an apposite motto to this case; and it was long since observed by a celebrated writer, that a polluted mind alone will attach improper ideas to ac-

tions, which though differing from the habit of polished sensibility, are the offspring of unsuspecting innocence.

For the credibility of the testimony which the writers of the scripture narrative have given, of such facts as fell under their own observation, or were transmitted to them, well attested ; we need not resort to inspiration—here it is superfluous : and if their report be conveyed in terms commonly understood, and communicate similar feelings to those which were impressed on their own minds, we have the truth as clearly and fully, as though it were announced from Heaven itself, with all the solemnity of the moral law at Sinai.

But those feelings upon the minds of the prophets, which begat that noble enthusiasm, and afforded those sublime views so peculiar

to them, of the perfections of the Deity interested in behalf of man, bespeak a source divine. Whoever can peruse the elegant and dignified composition of the prophecies in those inimitable poems, and not feel their inspiration, must forfeit every title to taste; nor can he claim to himself the feelings of either the scholar, the gentleman, or the christian.

It is of the first importance that the prophetic part of the scriptures be established, as written in the age they profess to speak of, for if it can be proved that any event was predicted an hundred, or even twenty years before it took place, it is a demonstration that the men were the mere passive agents of superior intelligence, the voice of the creator to the creature; consequently, every event predicted; and every principle unfolded, are

sanctioned as the report of infallible truth.

The promise of the Messiah, the distribution of the nations, and the minute detail of the miserable destruction of the Jews, with their consequent dispersion over the world, are most perspicuous, and generally known to have been foretold many ages before the events took place, which is decisive evidence of their origin.

The remarkable fulfilment of prophecy in the history of Egypt, Tyre, Babylon, Persia, the conquests of Alexander, the contention of his successors,* and the extensive circle of

* Perhaps there is no prophecy more close than that which describes the conquest of Alexander, his death, and the division of his kingdoms.—“ A mighty King shall stand up, and he shall rule with great dominion.”

This must mean Alexander, who ruled after the four Persian Monarchs mentioned in the preceding part of Daniel's prophecy. He conquered Darius, and seized on

the Roman Empire, are equally convincing; and require only to be candidly and closely investigated, to shew their divine source. But above all, the appearance, reception, and

his dominions—"And when he shall stand up his kingdom shall be broken and shall be divided to the four winds of Heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled. His kingdom shall be plucked up even for others beside these."

That Alexander died at Babylon in the height of his conquests, and in the full glory of his fame and empire, is a familiar fact in ancient history.

It is equally well known that his extensive dominions did not descend to his posterity, but were divided by his officers towards the four winds. This Grecian Empire which was raised by Alexander, and settled by his successors after much dissention among themselves, took place about 305 years before the birth of Christ, being subdivided into four great kingdoms. The first under Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, who had Egypt, Lybia, Arabia and Ethiopia.—The second belonged to Antigonus, and consisted of Syria and the lesser Asia, on the east and north.—The third was that of Lyfimachus over Thrace

ignominious crucifixion of the Messiah, so minutely and pathetically detailed by Isaiah, is irrefragible proof, that the holy prophets of Israel were not impostors; that they were

and the north.—The fourth was governed by Cassander, and consisted of Macedonia, Greece, and Epirus on the west.—These were the four successors of Alexander, in the Grecian Empire, whose kingdom was divided towards the four winds, and these were “the four notable horns of the he-goat” so called by Daniel, which came up after the great horn was broken, chap. 4th. verse 8th. Seleucus, though he was a successor in the dominion of Alexander, had no portion of the Grecian provinces, but ruled over the Babylonian and Persian kingdom.

Seleucus after conquering Antigonus, became possessed of one of the four Grecian kingdoms described by Daniel about 300 years before the vulgate christian æra, and about 17 years after this event, viz. 283 years before the birth of Christ, Seleucus securing the possessions of Demetrius the son of Antigonus, joined Syria and the lesser Asia to his own dominions.

Euseb. Chronic.

Lyfimachus united Macedonia to his own kingdom of

the appointed vehicles of the word of a holy God.

These things stand not on the sole representation of the scriptures; the heathen historians have many of them spoken of the

Thrace, but retained it only six years, being slain in battle by Seleucus about 281 before Christ. It is to be remembered, that previous to this event, in the war with Antigonus, Ptolemy conquered Phœnicia, Cœl, Syria, and the coast of Asia, and added them to his own kingdom of Egypt; so that Seleucus and himself, governed the whole Grecian Empire, now reduced from four to two great kingdoms, as described in the following part of the prophecy by the north and south.

This part of the prophecy of Daniel is so plain, that the whole force of Deistical argument has not being able to shake the solid foundation on which it stands. The only ground on which they attempt to stand, is the bare assertion, that it was composed after the events took place—whatever may be the confidence of Porphyry in this subterfuge, it fails in the present age, as much is fulfilled since his day, and part is now accomplishing.

predictions in the sacred writings of the Jews ;
 of this number are Diodorus Siculus, Longinus, Strabo, Tacitus, Suetonius, and Virgil, in his Pollio, has strong allusions to the predictions of Isaiah, on the advent of Messiah. But it is our intention to collect evidence from the writings themselves, and here we are happily assisted by the critics in the Hebrew tongue. Every language has its infancy, its youth, its maturity, and its decline. The works of Chaucer and Spencer evidently bespeak an antiquity greater than the writings of Johnson or Gibbon. This internal mark of comparative antiquity, we are informed by competent judges, is clearly to be traced in the bible. They say, the writings of Moses are proved to be produced in the infancy of the nation, and by a person conversant with the Egyptian

language, as many of his words are purely Egyptian.

From David to the captivity, the mark of a polished Hebrew language in its purest style is visible ; the writings of this æra exhibit a language matured by time, and a people affluent and refined ; to this period we may assign the writings of the prophets, which display only that variety of style which was natural to their several stations in life. Amos the plebeian, is particularly nervous, and displays a dignified simplicity, though his language is less flowing than that of the courtly Isaiah.

That they wrote during this period is certain, for except Ezra and Daniel, the language of them all is pure, unadulterated Hebrew, which ceased to be vernacular during the captivity ; and the writings of the

Jews, from that period, are adulterated by a mixture of Syriac and Chaldaic.

The same peculiarity of style which marks the date of the writings of the old testament, is equally perspicuous in the new: the frequent hebraisms, as the language was then spoken, are so intermixed with the Greek, as to prove it written by Jews, before, or not long after their dispersion. Jerusalem was destroyed 37 years after the crucifixion, and consequently they must have been written before, or not long after that period; but the penmen of the gospels speak of Jerusalem as then standing: "there is at Jerusalem, in the sheep-market," &c. &c. and the inference is fair, that they were written immediately after the ascension.

Clement of Rome, Policarp, and Ignatius, were the disciples and companions of the

apostles, and in their undoubted writings, frequent reference is made to the gospels, the acts, and most of the epistles, nor were the authenticity of them denied by the early heretics ; but where they militated against their errors, no subterfuge was left them but disputing their sense, or attributing what they could not evade, to erroneous transcription.

The incarnation, the miracles, the sayings, the sufferings, the resurrection, and ascension of Christ, are the great subject of the gospels ; the descent of the Holy Spirit, the labours, successes, and persecutions of the apostles, are the contents of the Acts ; the Epistles contain some things prophetic, exhortations to duties, narration of circumstances, arguments in support of christian doctrines, reproof for misconduct, and promises of future retribution ; and the book called Revelations, con-

tains prophecies concerning the state of the christian church and of the world, until the consummation of all things.

As no event recorded implies a contradiction, there is nothing in them impossible to Almighty Power, and Infinite Intelligence, and therefore the testimony by which they are delivered to us is deserving our credence—that they represent effects above the comprehension of that fragment of intellect which is apportioned to mortality, is allowed; and we assert that every work of Deity must be so; our faculties reach to the extent of our feelings and reflections only, they qualify us to judge ourselves, but not the ways or works of him whose goings are in the great deep of infinity.

The incomprehensibility of the mysteries (as they are termed) of christianity, is cer-

tainly no just objection against the belief of them, and contains no solid argument against Revelation ; on the contrary, perhaps it may be improved into a direct argument for the just foundation of our faith. May we not infer, that what so much transcends the capacity of human intellect, must much exceed its cunning to invent ; we may conclude, that the most sublime mysteries of revelation must have a divine origin ; it could not be human, for comprehension is inseparable from invention. No, they are offered to us as sacred truths above the reach of our capacities to conceive, but as objects of an ardent faith, which humbly receives the saving benefits, without presuming to question the mode by which they are disseminated.

The Resurrection alone, if established, supports the whole system of revelation ; for

the doctrines and precepts of Christ are supported from the old testament, and his frequent quotations from various parts, is an acknowledgement of its authenticity. That he arose from the dead, was witnessed by the eleven, by five hundred competent judges at one time, and by forty days intercourse with his followers, to whom he was fully known, and (notwithstanding the objection of infidels to this evidence) the proper witnesses to identify his person : and last of all, by his appearance to Paul, a professed and determined enemy.*

* The evidence in favor of Christianity, deducible from the conversion of Paul, has been so ably urged by the distinguished and eminently virtuous Lord Lyttleton, that an abridgment of his argument is due to our subject.

“ That Saul, from being a virulent persecutor, became suddenly a zealous disciple himself, is a fact which can-

That the fact was credited by the rulers of the Jews, is manifest, from the inconsistent story of the body being stolen ; that so gross

not be controverted, without overturning the credit of all history. He must therefore have been converted in the miraculous manner which he himself says he was ; and of course the Christian Religion is a divine Revelation, or he must have been either an impostor, an enthusiast, or a dupe to the fraud of others ; there is not another alternative possible.

If an impostor, he must have been influenced by some motive. But the only conceivable motives for religious imposture are, the hopes of gain, or credit, or power, or the hope of gratifying some passion or appetite, under the authority of the new religion.

That none of these could be Paul's motive for professing the faith of Christ crucified, is clear from the relative state of Judaism and Christianity, at the period of his renouncing the one, and embracing the other. The profession he left was the establishment of the country, and consequently possessed the disposal of wealth, of dignity, and power.—The faith he embraced, was despised, attended with indigence, and suffering cruel persecution.

an absurdity might obtain credit from the thoughtless and prejudiced multitude, will require no great stretch of faith to believe ;

The certain consequence, therefore, of his new profession, was not only the loss of what he enjoyed, but of all hopes of future acquirement ; whereas by continuing to persecute the christians, he was gratifying those in power ; and his ardent zeal in the cause must have secured their favour, and advanced his fortune. As to reputation, could the disciple of Gamaliel hope to rise in fame by associating with fishermen ? Could he flatter himself that the doctrines he taught, so inimical to the prevailing passions and propensities of human nature, and which he knew were to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness ; would in any way promote his honor ? Was it then the love of power ? over whom ? a degraded herd, which he himself had hunted to destroy ; and whose master had lately been executed as a criminal. Perhaps it was the view of gratifying some licentious passion ! This cannot be alledged ; for his writings breathe nothing but the strictest morality, and distinguished purity. We nowhere in his works are taught sentiments subversive of the order of society, or to regard any impulses of the mind which are contrary to reason, and op-

but that it should satisfy those who knew the deception they were palming upon the people, is incredible : and when the apostles were

posed to the law of our nature, as a divine revelation. He makes no distinction like the impostor of Arabia, in favour of himself, nor does any part of his life bear any mark of libertinism ; as among the Jews, so among the Christians, his conversation and manners are blameless.

As St. Paul was not an impostor, so it is plain he was not an enthusiast. Heat of temper, melancholy, ignorance, and vanity, are the ingredients of which enthusiasm is composed ; but from all these, except the first, he appears to have been wholly free. That he had great fervor of zeal, in maintaining what he thought to be right, cannot be denied ; but he was at all times so much master of his feelings, as in matters of indifference, " to become all things, to all men ;" with the most condescending politeness, he accommodated his conduct and his converse to the manners and views of others, where his duty to God, and attachment to truth would admit ; a conduct incompatible with the unamiable austerity of a bigot, and with the violent efforts of fanaticism. That he was not melancholy, is plain from his pursuing all prudent means to escape danger, and shun persecution,

arraigned before them, the reception of Gamaliel's council verifies the fact ; “ if this work be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.” A work

when he could do it without dishonouring his office, or forsaking his duty to God.

A melancholy enthusiast courts persecution, and afflicts himself with restrictions and absurd penances, when enjoyment is in his power ; as though it were well pleasing to the Deity to multiply miseries, and abuse the mercies his benevolence has provided : but the holiness of St. Paul consisted in the simplicity of a godly life, and an unwearied assiduity in his apostolical duties.

That he was ignorant, no man will alledge, who is not himself grossly ignorant ; for he appears not only to be possessed of all Jewish literature, but also to have been conversant with the writings of the Greek poets and philosophers. That he was not credulous, is plain, from his having resisted the evidence of our Lord's miracles, and of those of the apostles ; to the fame of which we cannot suppose him a stranger, as he lived in Jerusalem. And that he was free from vanity, may be gathered from all his writings, and the knowledge we have of his life. He represents himself as the least of the apostles, not meet to be called an apostle ; as the chief of sinners, in

founded in falsehood and imposture could not be of God, and if their consciences had not attested the truth, he must have been refuted, and the apostles punished.

We have already noticed the dispersion of the Jews as a proof of the authenticity of pro-

that he had persecuted the church of Christ : and he prefers in the strongest terms, universal benevolence to faith, and prophecy, and miracles, and all the gifts with which he could be endowed. Is this the language of vanity, or enthusiasm ? Did ever fanatic prefer active charity to his own religious opinions, to the illuminations of the spirit, and even to the crown of martyrdom ! That he was not a dupe to the imposture of others, is obvious ; the illiterate fishermen had not a capability of imposing on the enlightened disciple of Gamaliel ; and it was physically impossible that the circumstances attending his conversion could be produced by them. Since then Paul was neither impostor, enthusiast, nor a dupe to the craft of others, his conversion was miraculous, and the christian religion is a divine revelation."

See also the apology of the Bishop of Landaff.

phesy ; and the exact detail which is given by Moses, 28th Deuteronomy, appears more like an history than a prediction 3400 years before : and we cannot but express our astonishment, that this constant appeal to our senses should carry so little conviction to the mind. The history of the world produces nothing parallel to this ; every other people, whether colonists or conquerors, have, after the lapse of a few ages, been so completely swallowed up and blended with the Aborigines, that the distinction is not to be traced ; but here is a people scattered over the whole world, during 1800 years, yet in no part of the world do they incorporate with the other inhabitants, although their attachment to their ceremonies and institutions have exposed them, and do still expose them, to constant reproach ; which is so powerful a motive

to induce a coalition, that resistance to it cannot be accounted for on natural principles, and nothing less than divine power could effect ; setting them up as beacons, to warn the nations of the curse accompanying a rejection of the Messiah, and as a standing and sensible manifestation of the interference of the Deity in the transactions of men.

The fulfilment of the prophecies respecting the corruption of Christianity, is not less clearly demonstrative of the truth of Revelation. Paul, in the Thessalonians, has predicted the rise and progress of the many-headed monster Superstition, and which he calls the Man of Sin, representing it as exercising audacious despotism, under the mask of Religion, over the nations and rulers, subverting the principles of civil government, wresting the sword from its grasp, and arming

its subjects, superstitiously and fanatically to resist its just and regular authority ;—yea “ as sitting in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” That a mass of so much impudence and absurdity could ever have passed with men as the religion of the meek and holy Jesus, is a miracle above the derangement of the laws of dead matter, and is such an instance of the deterioration of human intellect, as may ever teach us how feeble are its efforts, when the concurrence of surrounding circumstances presents strong delusions ; and “ Satan worketh with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and all deceivableness of unrighteousness, to effect the condemnation of the wicked.” Of this every way miraculous monster, we are farther assured, “ that him shall the Lord destroy,” not by the power of embattled hosts, nor by

the shedding of torrents of human gore, but by the vivid brightness of his appearance : clearly intimating, that by the general diffusion of the light of truth, the mind of man should emerge from the noxious shades of ecclesiastical tyranny, in which it had so long been languishing, and reanimated by the genial sun of invigorating reason, explore the lucid regions of divine revelation.

Such is the work of God, nor can it be overthrown ; every obstacle to the dissemination of revealed religion must give way before the impulses of the Divine Spirit ; nor can either the prejudices or the power of man prevent the mighty, the extensive influence, of the holy gospel of Jesus. The meek and merciful spirit of genuine christianity, must ever inspire just feelings ; these can never produce the vengeful scourge. It seems to

be the order of God in the moral government of the world, to permit great evils to counteract each other; and what if the monster Infidelity be opposed by the monster Superstition? Truth shall not be overwhelmed in the conflict. "Woe is denounced against the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea;" when the great engine of Satan's devices is overturned, "the devil will exercise great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Rev. chap. xii. v. 12. But the purposes of the Deity shall stand, and pursue an even and undisturbed course; it is his high prerogative, to confound the insidious subtilty of the adversary of man, by overruling his devices; to subserve the purposes of diffusive benevolence, and unfold the perfection of his character. We cannot look

upon the recent transactions of the world, without connecting it in our minds with the moral government of God, and the establishment of revealed Religion. Who can conceive a mass of so many millions bursting from the chains of long established and deep rooted prejudice, sunk into the most abject and depressed state, and over-awed by military power; yet moving with concentrated force, as by an electric shock or volcanic eruption, and with an energy surmounting apparently insuperable obstacles;—Is it possible to contemplate events so bounded, in human view, with impossibility, and not acknowledge that this cannot be the offspring of natural causes? The inspiration of a superior intelligence is the only rational explanation of this phenomenon; no natural powers

appear to be equal to the production of sentiments so opposite to inveterate prejudices, so instantaneously produced, and so generally diffused. Casting our eyes over the theatre of those deep tragedies which have awakened the sympathies of Europe, with the torch of history in our hand, the idea of retribution swells upon the mind.

The very places where the dark diffimulation of superstition has let loose the fury of persecution, in those horrid massacres which have at different periods polluted the earth with torrents of protestant blood, there has political fury avenged the cause of suffering piety, and the descendants of those monsters of cruelty, have become the victims of popular licentiousness. To oppose the wickedness, the violence, and rapacity attendant upon

these events, is no argument against their origin. Pure and benevolent principles cannot of themselves produce disorder; and as it is the law of our nature that energies should spring from the force of feeling; impure and malevolent principles must exist before they can exert their influence; and if God, in judgment, withholds the restraints of his power, the wicked will do wickedly; the vicious passions of the human heart, opposed to each other in all their malevolence, are terrible in their operations; and if the designs of Deity were unqualified vengeance, they would speedily produce universal devastation. But we regard his acts as ammendatory, and when judgment has done its perfect work, the benevolence essential to perfection must produce good from evil, and render not only the follies, but the fury and

wickedness of the world, subservient to his general design of love and good will to men :
 “ The wrath of man it shall praise thee, and the remainder thou wilt restrain.” *David*.
 We learn only by experience ; and by permitting evil principles to act out all their mischief, seems to be the only way by which their odious nature can appear, or our feelings be impressed with due aversion and detestation of them.

The book of the Apocalypse has been so much a topic of discussion, that nothing in addition can be expected here ; we only notice the parallelism of dates with those of Daniel. 1260 years are repeatedly assigned for the reign of Superstition, during which Priestcraft should deceive the nations, and the vicious passions of the human heart subvert the benign principles of inspiration. 30 years

are named during which it shall be falling, and 45 years, in which truth shall be progressively advancing, and at length be universally triumphant. Could we correctly ascertain the commencement of these dates, precision would attend our conclusions.—Some state them from the Codex of Justinian, which is the strong fortress wherein ecclesiastical power is intrenched; others from the universality of the Bishop of Rome; and others from the union of civil dominion with spiritual authority. It is not for us to determine this point: but our design requires we should notice the objections which are made on the ambiguity of prophecy—why could we not be told in positive terms, that at certain periods particular events would take place, and by what means they were to be accomplished? We answer, that in the first

place, such information would often interfere with the accomplishment of the predictions ; and in the second place, the design of prophecy is not to acquaint us with events, but as our Lord informs his disciples, " that when they take place, we may know that he foretold them, and be confirmed in our faith."

On either supposition, the period cannot be far distant ; no calculations have carried it farther than the next century, before the world will realize better days than has been known to ages past, or is the portion of the present race. This is no small consolation to the feelings of benevolence ; the prospect of future good is cheering to humanity, and though we shall stand in our lot before that bright day shall dawn, yet we rejoice in the assurance that truth must ultimately prevail,

and behold with supreme delight, the consoling prospect of a world in peace, and the whole human race glowing with mutual love and good will towards each other, uniting in one sublime and animating song of praise to that merciful goodness which has redeemed it from the curse of conflicting passions, which has harmonized the feelings of the heart and the purposes of the intellect, in the ardent pursuit of general philanthropy.

We now attempt the most arduous part of our subject, and who is sufficient? can finite comprehend infinite? from the highest authority we are assured that "none by searching can find out the Almighty in the perfection of his being," nor can the manifestations he has vouchsafed of himself be truly apprehended, but by conformable feelings upon the soul.

The heart, which pulsates enmity at every stroke, against those perfections of the divine character which are the peculiar subject of revelation, will not readily acknowledge the authority of the revelation given : and while it displays a purity of principle, to which we have no accordant feeling, the ebullitions of the heart will, as the scriptures express it, “ cast up mire and dirt,” and its averfation will be expreffed in malignant reproach, and affiduous endeavours to obliterate from the world, principles fo abhorrent to its preposfessions.

The invifible things of God the Creator, which are feen by things that appear : his almighty power, infinite wifdom, and comprehensive goodnefs ; thefe pafs before us in univerfal being and confervation ; “ he giveth all things richly to enjoy, and filleth us with

food and gladness :” *all* participate in these diffusive benefits, and borne down by the strong current of their feelings, they have a demonstration that the source from whence they flow must be divine.

But revelation, while it announces a future state of existence, has clearly marked the characters who may look forward to it with confidence ; these marks are so unequivocal in their nature, and so comprehensive in their operation, that by the attentive observer, they cannot be mistaken ; and the discordant feelings so generally evinced, loudly protest a special limitation ; but the turbulent spirit of man revolts from the necessary conclusion, and impotently struggles to diminish the perfections of Deity, by assigning limits to his knowledge, by controlling his operations with contingencies, or by attempts to exclude

him from all interference in the government of the world. Yet reason, could her gentle whispers be heard, amidst the clamorous jargon of prejudice, would persuade, that the power which creates must conserve; for that which has not existence from itself, can continue to exist only by the power which first produced it; and the renewed successions which are continually taking place in the world, demonstrate a mover, with energies co-extensive with motion.

That creation is the product of omnipotence, and that infinite intelligence presides over all the transitions and transactions of the universe, guiding them to purposes of benevolence; is an important truth, which we wish to impress upon the minds of our readers, as administering to our solace under those circumstances which are inexplicable to

our circumscribed faculties ; and this we think must follow from a reference to its author. Perfect intelligence supposes perfect energies ; volition from defective motives, or directed to partial ends, can proceed only from imperfection, and that intelligence which is all comprehensive, though inconceivable to us, must embrace the good of the whole, so as to produce the best issues ; and however irreconcilable to the confined perception of man may be the difficulties arising from the conflicting passions, and opposing interests of man, these are little things with an infinite mind ; principles are its sphere of contemplation, and these proceed from a determinate and invariable source—the perfection of the divine nature ; whatever is hostile to just feelings, in the volitions of free agents, must therefore evidently be an

impediment to their felicity ; but it disturbeth not the steady and even course of divine energies ; these must ever direct to unite cause and effect.

To furnish mediums for the communication of benefits, and partake of the influence of the divine perfections, as they harmonize in one general principle of energy, is a dignified end of creation. Any immediate participation of these perfections by creatures, is irreconcilable with the notion of infinity in the first cause ; the essential perfections of Deity must be wholly incommunicable, their agency alone is all that limited beings can partake of: if the wisdom, the power or benevolence, they exercise, were an addition to the aggregate sum, where is the notion of infinity ? therefore we conclude, that all we discover in angels, or men of excellency, are only emanations from the Deity.

The image of God, in which man was created, must refer to these communications, and on our theory, will consist in just feelings, by which his mind was harmonized with the will of Deity, and all his pleasures derived from that source. We have before intimated, that without seduction no opposing or discordant feelings could be experienced : this agency is placed before us in revelation, as inspiring the feeling of self-gratification : but the source of being, containing within himself every possible good, could not form creatures with capacities for felicity, independent of its true origin ; this must derange the necessary order of cause and effect, and being contrary to the union of all perfection in the first cause, would place the divine attributes in opposition to each other : as this supposition is both impious and absurd, we

are driven to the conclusion, that the pursuit of enjoyment, in any thing short of the Deity, was a departure from the possibility of our well-being, and could produce nothing but disappointment ; for if pleasure be derived only from the things which surround us, there is a point beyond which they cannot follow us, and this passed, we enter a state where nothing can afford us solace.

Had indiscriminate justice left all men to the perverseness of their choice, and swept away the whole human race, only a partial effect of the divine attributes could have been afforded ; but Creation was intended for the participation of their united energies. Without a freedom of choice in man, his accountability is destroyed, and moral evil impossible ; and if the mind had not possessed a capability of two motives of action, freedom

of volition is inconceivable. Good and evil were thus only to be known by man, for having no possible medium of perception, but by the feeling present to the mind ; he must experience the one and the other for this information.

Nor let it be supposed an impeachment of the divine perfections ; no disunion among them can take place on this account, but their harmony requires that every principle should produce its own proper and determinate issue, and not its opposite : if no creature were left to the consequences of his choice, man must be formed with powers of which we can have no idea, to be impressed with a full conviction of evil.

We have more than once approached reflections, which lead to a subject the most difficult that can exercise the human mind ;

we have witnessed conspicuous talents swallowed in the mighty vortex, and the cautious circumspection which takes its soundings at every cable's length, will warily avoid the daring adventure of launching into its perilous depths.

Yet, as it may seem to argue a want of confidence in our theory, we shall not shun the difficulty which presents, and if we be conducted safely through, we persuade ourselves it will be a strong presumption in favor of its truth. We are not insensible of the arduous task before us, and therefore while we claim the right of judging for ourselves, we would exercise every sentiment of liberality toward those who differ, and invite their candid and deliberate attention; nor should we be without hope that truth would be convincing, had not experience fully ap-

prized us of the force of prejudice, the creeping insinuations of self-love, and the mistaken views so common, of our importance in the scale of existence.

The subject to which we refer, is that of **NECESSITY** and **LIBERTY**. Philosophers have long laboured to elucidate the dark questions of the constant conjunction of motive and action, and the self-determining power of the intellect. The great talents engaged on both sides, give to each a respectability that demands deference, and we venture with diffidence to tread a path, intersected at every inch by all the obstructions that active fancy, and vigorous intellect, can devise. That our actions are the result of motives has seldom been disputed; but whether that result be necessary, and leaves no determining power to the intellect, has been long and warmly disputed.

To us there appears to be some ambiguity, arising from the terms introduced into this controversy, and which we are inclined to think our theory of perception has a power of removing, as by changing the terms, ideas attached by prejudice will not connect, and probably just ones may be applied. But to give the reader an opportunity of estimating the validity of our system, we shall extract from the necessitarian theory of Lord Kames, and the defence of liberty by Dr. Gregory, the strongest arguments they have employed in support of their respective systems, and as these respectable writers are placed at the head of their several opinions, we have from them the strongest ground which can be taken on both sides.—Lord Kames observes, “that into actions done, to an end, desire and will enter; desire to attain the end goes first, the will to

act in order to accomplish it is next, and the external act follows of course. It is the will, then, that governs every action done, as a mean to accomplish an end ; and it is desire to accomplish that end which puts the will in motion : but what raises the desire, the answer is ready, it is the prospect of attaining some agreeable end, or avoiding one that is disagreeable. The external action is determined by the will, the will by the desire, and desire by the agreeable or disagreeable. Here is a chain of cause and effect, of which not one link is at the command of the agent, or can be broken ; nor do the agreeable or disagreeable depend on his fancy ; he has not a power of making a beautiful woman ugly, nor to make a rotten carcase smell sweetly : constant and universal experience prove that human actions are governed by laws, and that

a man cannot exert his self-moving powers but in pursuance of some desire or motive ; had motive always the same influence, actions would appear no less necessary than the actions of matter—the various degrees of influence, which motives have at different times, suggest the notion of chance. Some motives however, leave no doubt. A timid female, has a physical power to cast herself into the mouth of a roaring lion, but is withheld by terror, no less powerfully than by cords.—Now if a strong motive have a necessary influence, there is no reason for doubting but a weak one has an influence of the same kind, though not in the degree. Between two motives, however nearly balanced, a man has not an arbitrary choice, but must yield to the strongest, as a balance after many vibrations to the heaviest weight. Such

then are the laws, which govern voluntary actions; a man is absolutely free to act agreeable to his own will, and greater freedom than this is not conceivable."

Dr. Gregory, on the side of liberty, endeavours to prove that the "relation of motive and action is not that of constant conjunction, but, that a man may choose any one of two or more motives present to his view, and by choosing he may bend the desire to it—that in volition, the mind is not inert, and that therefore, we are under no necessity whatever."

And he further observes, "that upon the supposition of the inertia of mind, a man with equal, though opposite, motives presenting at one view, would, during their continuance, remain perfectly at rest, like a balance equally loaded in both scales. This

conclusion, though admitted by the necessitarian, is evaded by denying that the mind can be assailed by two opposite motives equally balanced at the same time."—But to state a case which the advocates for liberty consider as decisive, the Dr. supposes "a porter be offered a guinea for every mile he shall travel due east; if there be no cause to keep him at rest, or to cause him to move in any other direction, there can be no doubt but he would gladly embrace the proposal, and travel in the direction pointed out until he had obtained as much as his most avaricious wishes might crave. The same result would take place had the proposal been made on a direction due south.—In the two cases taken separately, the relation between the man's motive and action would be strikingly analogous to that of a single impulse, and

motion in physics. Let us now suppose the two offers be made him at the same time, what is he to do in this case? If the mind be inert in volition, and if the two motives operate upon him with the same necessity that cause and effect operate in physics, it appears that the man must move neither eastward nor southward, but in a middle line between the two—From whence it is concluded, that the relation between motive and action is not that of constant conjunction."

This short sketch gives a general view of the argument in the strongest positions which can be taken. It now remains that we assay the power of our theory, in reconciling the different conclusions, and removing the difficulties which it is obvious are in the way of both theories.

That nothing can act but where it is—that experience arises from conscious perception—that all our knowledge is the result of experience—and that all our perceptions are successive, are the leading principles of our theory. If nothing can act but where it is, motive cannot act upon mind or mind upon motive unless they be brought together, and as this can only be by the medium of feeling, we shall dismiss the term motive, and assume that of feeling.—The admission of this term will lead to the acknowledgment of an active intelligent principle. If there be feeling, there must be a subject on which it is impressed, with a capacity to perceive and a power of recognition—the feeling may possibly be produced by the agency of some extremely refined and active matter, but perception and recognition are modifications of

mind, from every energy of which all idea of matter is completely excluded.—As the feeling is not percipient, the agreeable or disagreeable must refer to a principle to which it is agreeable or disagreeable, and, consequently, the notion of perception carries with it a demonstration of an active power : to perceive is an energy as clearly as volition, and therefore the inertia of mind is impossible. Whether the feeling perceived by the intellect produces volitions approving or rejecting, will not depend primarily upon circumstances, but upon the state of the mind itself, which can have no pleasurable choice, where there is not an accordance with the external impression ; and if its energies be exerted to avoid that which is offensive, they will direct to volitions the nearest in affinity to the state of the mind.—The approbation or disappro-

bation of the mind will then depend upon the feeling present to it in the greatest force, and if education or habit have rendered a decorous and polished deportment familiar and agreeable to our mind, it will feel instant aversion at the approach of any thing indecent or vulgar. So also if we feel impressively a sense of the divine omnipresence, in all his perfection and purity, we shall possess feelings which will be highly sensible to the approach of every thing immoral and vicious, from which it will revolt with abhorrence. So long as these several states of mind continue in strength, they will necessarily render us averse to one class of feelings and gratified by another ; this necessity will ever connect our volitions with the corresponding circumstance when it occurs ; but the mind is evidently the moving principle. Here then,

we have freedom of volition, and the constant conjunction of motive and action, nor can they be disjoined but by annihilating every notion which we connect with mind. That causes under equal circumstances must ever produce the same effect, cannot be denied; yet on our theory, these causes have their existence in the mind, no concurrence of circumstances can *impel* volition, the will cannot be forcibly controled, nor our minds be approached by circumstances, but through the medium of feeling; in every instance of seduction from the law of reason, feeling supplants feeling; and where these have not their origin in the constitution of our nature, they must be referred to the agency of mind, as the only principle that can immediately act upon mind. Therefore, on every view of the subject, the inertia

of mind is inconceivable : admit its existence, and its activity is necessary.

A necessity, that knows not the compulsive force which unites discordant and opposing things together ; but is founded in that relation and affinity, by which like attaches to like, and is evidently a principle operating throughout all intelligence. It will be perceived that we differ from the necessitarian by supposing the agreeable and disagreeable to be totally dependant upon the mind, and though we have not a power to make beauty deformity, yet it is manifest that the perception of beauty will depend upon the previous idea we have formed of it.—To the Tartar, the flat nose is attractive, to the Savoyard, the goter is equally an object of admiration, and to the footy inhabitants of Africa, the fair complexion of the north is cold and uninte-

resting when compared with the ripened beauty of their jetty dames.—That the organs will convey to the intellect the impression upon them is certain, and that the rotten carcase will not be agreeable, but we have no doubt where effluvia is not noxious, we may be so familiarized to it as to feel, if not agreeably, at least, nothing offensive; and to render necessity here complete, there must be but one opinion upon odours, but we are persuaded there is great diversity in this respect; the perfume of one individual is highly ungrateful to another. It is a wise ordination of nature, that noxious effluvia should act immediately upon us, as the process of reasoning from effect to cause would often outrun the season of action, and probably our mechanism is formed upon this necessity, and the mind exerts its energies

instinctively.—In the necessitarian chain of cause and effect, we follow them in supposing the external action determined by the will, the will, by the desire, and the desire, by the agreeable or disagreeable; but we differ in supposing desire and aversion to depend on the external circumstances; these feelings we recognize in the intellect, and when accordant or discordant causes excite, they each produce their own proper energies. Nor are we convinced that any motive of action gives assured proof that their theory is founded in truth:—That a timid female will not under common circumstances cast herself into the mouth of a roaring lion, is certain: yet we believe such a state of mind and such a conjunction of circumstances may exist, and sometimes have existed, when this alternative would be readily embraced.

From the advocates for liberty we also dissent.—The supposition of the porter is wholly irrelevant to our theory; we assert the energy of mind, and this applies only to its inertia; so far we agree—On the principles we have attempted to establish, every notion of physical necessity is excluded from mind; and if the term may be admitted, a moral necessity takes its place, founded in the limitation of our faculties, and which necessarily confines our energies to the powers and feelings we have, and denies a capacity to act on those we have not.—To us it is not self-evident “that a man may choose any one of two motives presenting to his view; that by choosing he may bend his mind to it, or that we are under no necessity whatever.” That two motives may immediately present to the intellect, our notion of succession will

not admit us to allow. We grant the wonderful activity of mind; yet on a strict analysis of perception, we are persuaded that the energies of mind are transferred from feeling to feeling—in detached objects of sense, this may appear difficult of comprehension to the reader, though perfectly clear in our view, and we conceive, that if he make the experiment upon separate compound ideas, he will find it completely impossible to join them in one perception.—If in Bath he has a recollection of London, his ideas are transferred, they run from place to place, from circumstance to circumstance, with the rapidity of lightning; would he exercise his mind on the place of his residence, his ideas pass from street to street: his apartments, his friends, his amusements, successively present; but while one scene is

perceived, the other though immediately passed is not in view, and a succession is evident.

Our energies called out by two or more successive feelings, will not be governed by their abstract but by their relative force ; we shall not be influenced in our volitions by their real importance, but by the relation they have to the feeling of our own minds, and consequently, on the state of the mind, our volitions depend.

To suppose a power of acting against the feeling upon the mind, is to assert that things act where they are not ; or rather, to represent the absurdity in full portrait, that where they are not, they counteract things which really and positively are.—To contend with this difficulty, is the labour of these philosophers. We affirm, that the feeling present

in greatest force, will necessarily determine our volitions.

That choice or volition should precede the feeling and its perception, is conceivable only upon the mechanic system, which excludes the notion of mind altogether.—If motive and action have a relation, or if mind be the source of our energies, it is impossible to conceive these energies exerted in opposition to feeling, to perception, and will. Could we possibly conceive a monster, combining in himself these opposing principles; we are happy in the belief, that man has no affinity to him.—We have repeatedly represented it as a part of our system, that man can have no perception but of the feeling present, or energy experienced, and that his volitions are not the result of discord and opposition, but a necessary conjunction of

external impressions harmonizing with the feelings of the mind.

It has been represented that instances occur wherein men act against desire, and the strongest motive. The case of Joseph, is supposed to be fully in point, and that no abstract perception of duty could in such an instance, counteract the impression of sense, and therefore, if we could not act against desire and the strongest motive, such a case would be absolutely impossible. We have asserted the feeling of the intellect on the experience of its own energies equally with impression from without ; we also affirm it to be the subject of divine communication. It is not then the abstract perception of duty, but the potent feeling of an omnipresent God, that guards " the path of the just," and conducts him in triumph through the assaults

of temptation.—That we are under no necessity whatever, appears to us to be irreconcilable with the theory itself, for if man be a free agent, he must when acting rationally, be under the necessary laws of reason; the intellect is one and indivisible, and reason, as it relates to him, is the right application of circumstances as they occur; but circumstances are not under his controul; as they respect material things, they are under the necessary laws of matter, and in the order of presentation they are under the moral government of Deity. A ball issuing from the mouth of a cannon is under the necessary law of projectiles, but whether this man or that man shall be placed within its range, is at the disposal of him in whom are all our ways, and in whom we live, and move, and have our being. In placing our energies

under the immediate controul of circumstances, physical necessity is established over mind, which we think impossible, and on our theory, though the external circumstance may excite the feelings of mind, and occasion new and diversified modifications, yet it gives no new principle of action ; these are inherent, consist in its own proper feelings, and constitute the essence of its permanent existence.

This concise view of the argument will, we hope, be clear, though it is evidently too much compressed to meet every objection ; we feel a persuasion, however, that the sketch we have given, will evince the power of our theory to meet every difficulty which can be raised.

We trust the reader will consider this digression as not irrelevant to our subject, and we return.

Respecting the nature of future retribution, revelation is not minute, but from the equity and perfection of the Supreme Judge, and the declarations made to us, we conclude, that to the criminal the measure he meets shall be measured to him again, and consequently, the guilt of those actions or sentiments alone of which he is conscious can attach to him ; and with respect to those whose feelings give them just perceptions of the Deity, and general conformity to his will, nothing can be conceived in addition, “ they shall be like him, for they shall see him as he is.”

Infidelity has arraigned the scripture representation of the divine character, as selfishly regarding its own glory to the disparagement of his benevolence ; but this objection is futile, and evidently results from partial and

limited views of the Deity ; selfishness is the offspring of want, but to the Creator of the world there is no sense in which it can apply, for as there is no good existing out of himself, if benevolent, he must be selfish, and if selfish, he cannot but be benevolent.

Man, by apostacy from his God, has placed himself under a moral inability of intercourse with him, but without a restoration of communications from him and communion with him, his hope must cease for ever. The assumption of our nature by the Redeemer, hath opened a new and living way to God, through the pure medium of his righteousness ; and divine justice having accomplished the manifestation of the evil of transgression, all the purposes of punishment are effected toward those who repose their confidence in the merits of the Saviour,

with an unmingled consciousness of guilt, a steady and grateful sense of high and unlimited obligation, and an humble dependence upon him operating powerfully upon the mind.

The impious remarks which have been made on this scene of wonders to angels and men, by certain pretenders to reason, are proofs of the blindness of prejudice, and the impotence of human intellect to comprehend infinite perfection. So bounded and beclouded is the mind of man, that it cannot but err in its notions of the Deity: "thou thinkest that I am altogether such an one as thyself," is a charge of ancient date against these philosophers. They form their notions of the highest good from what they regard as good, and evil from that which they esteem evil, and mere nature can reach no farther;

hence we find the haughty and intolerant spirit of these pure disciples of nature contemning the holy meekness of the Redeemer, and spurning as degrading those lovely sentiments of patient endurance, which teach us to sustain injuries without resentment, and to render good for evil.

Principles act uniformly, and, under equal circumstances, must ever produce similar events. The impure medium of human passions has ever been a source of error; from hence arose the polytheism of the ancients, and all the superstitions of the moderns—a vengeful Jove, a blood-stained Mars, a jolly Bacchus, an over-reaching Mercury, a wanton Venus, and a voluptuous Apollo, were the vicious propensities of man personified: and in the present day, the homage paid by their respective votaries is not the less real

for having dropped the personification. And we are indebted to that revelation so much despised and calumniated, for every notion of superior dignity which these advocates of nature would inculcate. It is equally the glory and the benefit of revelation, that it imposes restraints upon the conduct of mankind ; that it teaches us the apparently difficult doctrine of self-denial, on the pure principles of an all-embracing philanthropy. The holy gospel of Jesus, commands us to regard the divine will as the sole and uniform standard of the regulation of life ; and the love of God as the beginning, end, foundation, principle and accomplishment, of moral perfection. All the diversity of forms which have assumed the name of religion not derived from personal inspiration, may be classed under two divisions, the one

sanctioning crimes, and the other offering easy dispensation for them : deism is a renunciation of all religion, and its consistent professors can have no higher claim than disciples of nature. It might be shewn historically, that superstition originated in a false conception of the appointments in the scripture, applying sensible ideas to spiritual principles : things which were ordained of God as mediums to impress right feelings upon the mind, were the whole that lay open to general observation ; those who looked no farther, considered the means as the end ; the mere mechanism of actions engrossed them, and these not having right feelings for their foundation, would be grounded upon those which were false ; and this conduct must proceed so long as the principle from whence it arises continues to operate ; those

who adopt the opinions of their fathers are religious only by prejudice, and are unconscious of the feeling of the mind which regards a right end. Man is lost to the feelings in which he stood the image of his maker; and clearly on the principles we have attempted to urge, our reasoning can only be from ourselves; as we feel, so we think: the most pure and elevated feelings of the mind are those from which we form our notions of Deity; and those just feelings which were produced by divine communications being interrupted by apostacy, leave to nature no higher sources of discovery than ourselves being unlike to God, we conceive a God like unto us; and when our actions are pleasing in our view, we conclude they must be highly acceptable to him. As the attachment of the heart is to money, to

pleasure, to friendship, or any self-gratification, so will the sacrifices we make be esteemed by us :—as men among men, the transactions we have with each other proceed very properly upon this principle of compensation ; if a favor be received, a favor is due, and if the labour of others administer to our accommodation, our labour, in act or value, is due to them ; on this low grovelling principle of barter, the religion of many is founded : it may probably be considered as a degrading allusion, but it partakes so much of the mercantile system, that we should be induced to suspect the compting-house, rather than the college, is its true parent. So opposite is the sentiment to the perfection of Deity, and yet so closely is it interwoven in the heart of man, that the teachings of revelation principally direct to

manifest its absurdity, and to exalt the divine character above such vulgar, such degrading sentiments.—“ If I were hungry I would not tell thee, the cattle upon a thousand hills are mine ; though thousands of rams and ten thousands of rivers of oil, though the fruit of the body be given for the sin of the soul,” yet cannot it render compensation ; and Paul affirms, “ that though we have great learning, great elocution, deep science, a sound faith, and give all our goods to feed the poor, yet without love it is nothing”—love to God for his essential goodness, and to man for his sake. Such are the sublime discoveries of revelation respecting God, and such are its humbling declarations of human attainments, and we may confidently challenge the world to produce any system which gives such consistent and noble displays of a perfect

being, or such exact and clear descriptions of the state of man in the defection of his nature. Compensation is irreconcilable with criminal justice, all the laws of civilized society resist it; and if a slight reference be made to the perfection and harmony of the divine attributes and the nature of consciousness, it will evince that in the order of things it is impossible. All departure from the principle of our well-being, is a moral incapacity to the rectitude of our future volitions; as the mind has modified itself, it will more readily modify, than upon entire new perceptions.

As the guilty action can never be recalled, or any in succession be above the requirements of equity, so also our aptitude to decline from a right rule must be increased by every declension, and as nothing can be contributed as a compensation for the past,

or a provision for the future ; while consciousness remains, the attachment of guilt is firm and compleat.

That we should be under the necessity of making any remark upon the superiority of the morality of the bible over every system which has appeared in the world, is disgraceful to the philosophy against which we contend, for nothing but the perverseness of malevolence could have attempted to obscure the clear and dazzling lustre with which it shines with a diffusive beam over the thankless children of the dust. Nothing but the intolerable pride of such a being as man, could have described that system as impotent, which penetrates through the dark passions of the soul, exciting the animating glow of vigorous and expansive benevolence, which extends the ardor of its love and the activity

of its charity towards the bitterest enemies, and which inspired by the most perfect of humilities, returns the storm of direful curses with the showers of heavenly blessings.

But it seems the national partialities of the Jews are offensive to these tender disciples of elevated nature, and the moral conduct of some of their great characters is highly repugnant to the purity of their feelings—their very prayers cannot please. The national prejudices of the Jews were certainly great, and had prevailing influence upon their conduct ; we trust our theory has in some degree shown the sources from whence it arose, and we conceive it does not merit the severity of remark with which it has been treated, since all the boasted philosophy of nature never improved on their practice ; and from a review of the history of the world through a long

series of ages, we are authorised to affirm, that if censurable, it is not their crime exclusively, all nations have acted upon the principle ; and from the power of association, the good resulting in many instances from national prejudice, will teach us to expect it should be prevalent, until the human mind be impressed with nobler feelings than can arise from natural sources ; at the present instant, we are doubtless benefited in consequence of its energies ; and among all the sages of antiquity, the love of our country was esteemed one of the highest and sublimest virtues, and the man actuated thereby was entitled by the universal suffrage of his fellow-citizens to the deserved name of patriot.

In the moral conduct of some of their first characters, we have cause to bewail the degeneracy of man, and to hide ourselves

from the shameful disgrace of our common nature. But the scriptures profess to give a faithful narration of the history of mankind, and to represent its energies operating on surrounding circumstances ; and it must be confessed they represent man as a prey to the seductive influence of his passions when the fear of God is not the feeling present in greatest force to the mind : but this is no impeachment of the morality of the bible ; on our theory, and as we conceive from the book itself, this must necessarily be the unhappy fact.

The exultation therefore, expressed in representing them vicious in sentiment and profligate in practice, is a stigma due to the species, and contrition better becomes us than reproach.—It is to the credit of the narrative, that it exhibits the whole of every

character delineated ; the facts are given in all their circumstances, and often in their more remote inducements, with all the simplicity of truth. Could historians now as fully know motives, and were they equally faithful to facts, we are apprehensive that to circumstances alone we must refer for superior morality.

Their prayers have been represented as vindictive, and that victory or vengeance dictated all their addresses to the Deity. We hesitate not to pronounce this an unfounded calumny, and the appearances on which it is founded, arising from ignorance of the language in which they wrote ; we have high authority for affirming, that the petitionary word *let* should constantly be rendered the predictive *shall*, and that the sentences where it occurs, are always a prophecy, or declaration of principle operating by cause and effect.

We cannot therefore refrain in turn to exult in the superior morality of the bible: how low, how grovelling, how contracted and feeble, is every other sentiment, compared with the divine philanthropy of the scriptures! soaring above our country or our kind, it comprehends universal being in all its gradations; propagates universal good will, and apportions its benevolence to the sum of being it represents. The crawling worm, the creeping insect, the winged orders and animal tribes, to their climax man, ranging through the species, all partake of this benignity; embracing angelic nature, it ascends in the intellectual world, through those "thrones, dominions, powers," until passing finite, it be wholly absorbed in the infinite source of all being.

This expansive feeling of universal love, is exclusively, the honor and felicity of that

system which has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel ; and till the sublime and lovely character of the Redeemer was unfolded, pure, disinterested virtue, was unknown upon earth ; to return love for hate, and blessing for cursing, is a participation of celestial benignity : philanthropy so luminous, is too vivid for the dim and clouded vision of unassisted nature—the strong and steady eye of efficacious faith alone has powers to view its splendor—sentiment so comprehensive, is too vigorous for the languid embrace of feeble forms, and the affected courtesies of the unfeeling world : the expansive gratitude of divine love diffused through the soul, can alone inspire the energetic, the dignified, and all-comprehending feeling.

The swelling showers of mercy descending in a Redeemer's sacrifice, is the only

efficient principle that can raise in the human heart that strong current of love which sweeps before it the vengeful ebbings of malignant passions. All powerful and efficacious, the lucid dispensation of redemption announces the peace of heaven—joy thrills through the celestial orders at the opening portals of divine compassion, while they ascribe glory to God in the highest, their rapturous accents dwell on the pleasing proclamation of peace on earth, and good will to men. And proportioned to the influence of the religion of inspiration in the world, will its happiness extend; the turbulent and selfish feelings of the heart must subside. And to love others as ourselves, will be the high object of universal emulation; when under the mighty influence of the divine spirit, all the kingdoms of the earth, shall become the kingdoms of God and of his Christ.

THE END.

